

**“STUDENT ACCESS TO PREPARED & EFFECTIVE TEACHERS:
UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF FEDERAL POLICY”**

Briefing Panelist Bios

Dr. Leslie T. Fenwick, Dean, School of Education, Howard University – Leslie T. Fenwick, PhD is Dean of the Howard University School of Education. An expert on education policy (particularly as it relates to urban school reform and race equity), Dr. Fenwick has held administrative and faculty appointments at HBCUs for nearly 20 years and at Harvard University as a Visiting Fellow and Visiting Scholar in Education. Leslie is a former urban school principal and teacher (in public and private schools) and legislative aide for the State of Ohio Senate. Additionally, she is a contributor to the book, The Last Word: Controversy and Commentary in American Education, which boasts essays by former President Bill Clinton and noted historian Dr. John Hope Franklin. Dr. Fenwick is a member of the board of directors and national advisory board for the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) and the George Lucas Educational Fund (GLEF), respectively. She received this year’s W.E.B. DuBois Award from the National Alliance of Black School Educators (NABSE) in recognition of her commitment to and advocacy for Black students. Leslie earned her PhD at The Ohio State University and a bachelor’s degree from the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia.

Ms. Sharon Gallagher-Fishbaugh, President, Utah Education Association – Sharon Gallagher-Fishbaugh, the 2009 Utah Teacher of the Year, is known to her second grade students at Salt Lake City’s Dilworth Elementary as “Mrs. G.” Gallagher-Fishbaugh, a National Board Certified Teacher, has more than 32 years’ experience in Utah Public Schools. She served as the co-chair of Utah’s National Board Certified Teacher Coalition, a member of the Commission on Effective Teachers and Teaching and a member of the Utah Governor’s Education Commission. In 2009, Sharon was named the Salt Lake City School District Teacher of the Year. In April, 2010, the NEA Foundation awarded her the NEA Member Benefits Award for Teaching Excellence. Gallagher-Fishbaugh left the classroom in 2010 to serve a three-year term as president of the 18,000-member Utah Education Association. She is a member of the state Office of Education Teaching Standards workgroup on serves on several education committees and boards. She earned a B.A. from Loretto Heights College in Denver and a M.A. from National University in La Jolla, California. She is also a member of the National School Reform Faculty.

Mr. Eric Gonzalez, Education Policy Advocate, NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. – Eric Rafael González serves as the Education Policy Advocate for the Washington D.C. office of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc., (LDF). His work focuses on establishing equitable educational opportunities for all children through the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and other legislative reforms. Prior to joining LDF, Eric served for five years as the Program Director at a New York City-based nonprofit organization that offers academic and social support programs to public school students. In addition to teaching, his work also entailed working with students and their families to advocate for reforms to education funding policies at the city and state levels. Mr. González earned an Ed.M. from the Harvard Graduate School of Education as a recipient of the Urban Scholar Fellowship, a masters degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and a bachelor's degree from The State University of New York at Purchase College.

Dr. Julian Vasquez Heilig, Assistant Professor of Educational Policy, University of Texas, Austin – Julian Vasquez Heilig is an award-winning researcher and teacher. He obtained his Ph.D. in Education Administration and Policy Analysis and a Masters in Sociology from Stanford University. He also holds a Masters of Education Policy in the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education and a Bachelor’s in History and Psychology from the University of Michigan. He is currently an Assistant Professor of Educational Policy and Planning and [African and African Diaspora Studies](#) (by courtesy) at the University of Texas at Austin. He is also a Faculty Associate of the [Center for Mexican American Studies](#) and the Warfield Center for African and African American Studies. Since 2007, he has also served as an Associate Director for the [University Council of Education Administration \(UCEA\)](#). His current research includes quantitatively examining how high-stakes testing and accountability-based reforms, incentive systems, and teacher quality impact urban minority students. Additionally, his qualitative work considers the sociological mechanisms by which student achievement and progress occur in relation to specific NCLB-inspired accountability policies in districts and schools for students of different kinds. For more information go to <http://julianvasquezheilig.info>

Ms. Maribel Heredia, Plaintiff, *Renee v. Duncan* – Maribel Heredia is the mother of two public school children in Hayward, California, a small working class city east of San Francisco. In February 2007, she attended her first PTA meeting to discuss the impending closure of six local elementary schools in predominantly low-income, Spanish-speaking neighborhoods. From that catalyzing moment on, Heredia became a champion for the rights of low-income and English-learner students, as well as the rights of parents to receive better information about their schools. Heredia is a plaintiff in *Renee v. Duncan*, a lawsuit charging the U.S. Department of Education with failing to enforce the right of all students to have a “highly qualified” teacher as defined by the No Child Left Behind Act. The Ninth Circuit ruled in her favor in September 2010. A petition for rehearing filed by the Department of Education is currently pending. In 2008, Heredia was elected to the Board of Trustees of the Hayward Unified School District, a district serving over 20,000 students. Heredia serves as a Family Advocate at United for Success Academy, a public middle school within the Oakland Unified School District. A high school drop out, she returned to school in her late 20s and later earned a BA in Psychology from the University of Southern California.

Dr. Megan Hopkins, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, School of Education and Social Policy, Northwestern University – Megan Hopkins, Ph.D., is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the School of Education and Social Policy at Northwestern University and a Research Associate for the Civil Rights Project/*Proyecto Derechos Civiles* at the University of California, Los Angeles. She began her career in education as a bilingual elementary school teacher and Teach for America corps member in Phoenix, Arizona, and she later worked as a field supervisor and instructor for UCLA's Teacher Education Program. Dr. Hopkins' research focuses on the preparation of teachers of English learners and the implementation of federal and state policies for racial and linguistic minority students. Relevant publications include "Training the Next Teachers for America: A Proposal for Reconceptualizing Teach for America" (Phi Delta Kappan, June 2008) and *Forbidden Language: English Learners and Restrictive Language Policies* (Teachers College Press, 2010). Dr. Hopkins received her Ph.D. in Education from the University of California, Los Angeles, and she holds an M.Ed. in International Education Policy from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and a B.A. in Spanish from Indiana University.

Dr. John Jackson, President and CEO, Schott Foundation for Public Education – John H. Jackson is the President and CEO of The Schott Foundation for Public Education. In this role, Dr. Jackson leads the Foundation's efforts to ensure a high quality public education for all students regardless of race or gender. Dr. Jackson joined the Schott Foundation after seven productive years in leadership positions at the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). He served as the NAACP Chief Policy Officer and prior to that as the NAACP's National Director of Education. Dr. Jackson also served as an Adjunct Professor of Race, Gender, and Public Policy at the Georgetown Public Policy Institute. In 1999, President William Jefferson Clinton appointed Dr. Jackson to serve in his administration as Senior Policy Advisor in the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S. Department of Education. Dr. Jackson possesses a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Xavier University of Louisiana, a Master of Education in Education Policy from the University of Illinois' College of Education, and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Illinois' College of Law. In addition, Dr. Jackson received a Master of Education and Doctorate of Education in Administration, Planning, and Social Policy from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Dr. Jackson also served on the Obama-Biden transition team as a member of the President's 13-member Education Policy Transition Work Group.

Ms. Shayla Johnson, 12th Grade Student Representative, Overbrook High School, Philadelphia School District; Member, Philadelphia Student Union – Shayla Johnson is a senior at Overbrook High School in the School District of Philadelphia. She is an active member of the Philadelphia Student Union, a youth-led organization working to build the power of young people to demand a high quality education for all students in Philadelphia public schools. For more information, visit <http://home.phillystudentunion.org/>

Ms. Laura Kaloi, MPA, Public Policy Director, National Center for Learning Disabilities, Inc. – Laura Kaloi has led NCLD's policy office since 1999. Laura has spearheaded legislative initiatives focused on every major education and disability law including the Elementary Secondary Education Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Higher Education Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act. She launched the Keep Kids Learning campaign that successfully influenced the IDEA 04 reauthorization and directs national collaborative efforts such as the LD Roundtable. Laura serves as an officer on the Board of Directors of the Consortium for Citizen's with Disabilities (CCD), is co-chair for CCD's Education Task Force, is a member of the Executive Committee of the Friends of the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute for Child Health and Human Development. She also serves on the national advisory committee of the National Center on Accessible Instructional Materials. She works extensively with the U.S. Congress and the U.S. Department of Education to ensure students with learning disabilities are fully considered in legislation and regulations. She has twenty years of education and health policy experience.

Mr. Robert Mahaffey, Director of Communications, The Rural School and Community Trust – Robert Mahaffey is the Director of Communications for the Rural School and Community Trust, the premier national advocacy organization dedicated in helping rural schools and communities grow better together. Mr. Mahaffey was previously Vice President of Communications, New American Schools, the Publisher and Communications Director, National Association of Secondary School Principals, and Vice President, External Relations, National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare. In 2011, Robert Mahaffey was elected President, Organizations Concerned about Rural Education (OCRE), a national coalition of education, agriculture, community development, technology and utility organizations dedicating to providing a quality education for all rural children and securing the economic future of rural America. As a West Virginia resident, he is a certified substitute teacher and has a BS degree in Political Science and English from Brigham Young University and an MS degree in Management from the University of Maryland.